Conner Prairie
STEP INTO THE STORY

ACTIVATING OUR
FUTURE

2022 IMPACT REPORT

Smithsonian Affiliate
OUR MISSION
Conner Prairie is a unique historic place that inspires curiosity and fosters learning by providing engaging and individualized experiences for everyone.

OUR VISION
Conner Prairie will expand the boundaries of our historical and natural resources by exploring, celebrating, and improving the human experience.

DEAI PROMISE STATEMENT
Conner Prairie is a place where the doors are always open to a diversity of voices and limitless experiences.
INTRODUCTION FROM NORMAN BURNS

During 2022, we engaged our guests in new and creative experiences while staying true to our core mission to inspire curiosity and foster learning.

Our focus is on enriching Conner Prairie’s programs, audiences, and community engagement — all to activate our future as a museum and the audiences we serve today and tomorrow.

In this annual impact report, you will learn more about how we have been redefining how the world views and uses museums and what our research says about how our guests use Conner Prairie and say about museums. You will learn about how we leverage our Smithsonian affiliation and how we activate learning, agriculture, finances, and our community.

Our heart for the past and head for the present is helping us realize our eye to the future though our newest permanent exhibit, *Promised Land as Proving Ground*, opening in 2023. Uplifting the voices of all Hoosiers and telling The Whole Story, we stand committed to our values and DEAI promise to be “a place where the doors are always open to a diversity of voices and limitless experiences.” By telling more diverse stories and enhancing our accommodations for all guests, we become a more accessible and inclusive organization that further realizes our mission to provide engaging and individualized experience for everyone.

Conner Prairie continues to be a leader in creating a more sustainable future for our community through efforts to protect and enhance the White River. Through community partnerships and developments in our Prairie Pathways Campaign, we are preparing for the construction of the Prairie and Vista Trails that will immerse guests in the landscape shaped by the prairie oxbow of the White River.

In 2022, we received our fourth re-accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums. As one of fewer than 4% of the nation’s museums to be accredited by the AAM, I am encouraged to see the value and impact Conner Prairie continues to have in our local community and nationally in the museum profession.

This past year our business of enrichment laid the groundwork for activating our future. This year, our business of change will help us realize plans for our immediate future and the creation of a new strategic plan will help us set the stage for not just changing the way the world views and uses museums, but how museums like Conner Prairie can help change the world.

Best Regards,

Norman Burns

*President and Chief Executive Officer*
As a community connector, responsible for interpreting the history of the past to inform the present and inspire a brighter future, we are looking to our 1,000+ acres and community to inform how we redefine the way the world views and uses Museums.

Like museums all across the country, Conner Prairie is meeting the challenge of engaging an evolving audience, ever more diverse in background, age, and accessibility, while striving to remain relevant and critical in our educational and cultural landscape. Conner Prairie is among just 4 percent of museums accredited by the American Alliance of Museums, and is also one of 250 sites globally recognized by the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience.

### WHAT RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT

#### OUR REACH [1]

- **9/10** Hamilton County, IN residents have visited Conner Prairie in the past 5 years.
- **5/10** Marion County, IN residents have visited Conner Prairie in the past 5 years.

- **4** the number of times a member visits Conner Prairie a year, on average.
- **40%** of unique Conner Prairie visitors are members, but members account for **60%** of total visits.

### FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN VISIT CONNER PRAIRIE....

- **86%** to have a fun time.
- **64%** to make a family memory.
- **60%** to spark children’s curiosity.

### TOTAL 2022 ATTENDANCE

**347,254**
Since becoming Indiana’s first Smithsonian Affiliate in 2008, Conner Prairie is part of a select group of museums, cultural, educational, and arts organizations that share the Smithsonian’s resources with the nation. We actively work with the Smithsonian Institution to increase discovery and inspire lifelong learning in our community.

Habitat
Launched in fall of 2022, Habitat was developed by Smithsonian Gardens and made possible by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service.

Spark!Lab
Spark!Lab was developed by the Smithsonian Institute’s Lemelson Center for the Study of Invention and Innovation and opened in summer of 2022.

WHAT RESEARCH SAYS ABOUT MUSEUMS

People trust museums more than...
- Researchers and Scientists
- Other Nonprofits
- National News Organizations

76% of Americans believe that arts and cultural organizations should address at least one social issue, when given a list to pick from

42% said that they should address Systemic Racial Injustices
31% said Income Inequality and the Wealth Gap

HISTORY MUSEUMS ARE MEETING THIS CHALLENGE.
From 2017 to 2021, the percentage of US adults feeling that history museums “are not welcoming to people like me” decreased nearly 10% (from 36.2% to 27.9%)

Sources
Our Education team offered limitless, immersive experiences in 2022, meeting guests where they are to sink into the process of learning, erasing the pressure of an expected outcome or final product. More than ever, guests were given the freedom to step into their own stories.

Preschool on the Prairie
2022 welcomed more invitations for play at the preschool embracing risk, invention, imagination, and creativity. Immersed in the fields and woods of Conner Prairie, our Education department saw the impact child-led play and exploration has in empowering the children with a sense of self that will serve them well in all environments and situations in their future.

Says one parent: “He gets to be who he wants to be. And they [the staff] make it safe and comfortable for him every day. He’s wild, but he wants to learn.”

HSE Partnership
The 4th grade Conner Prairie field trip is a well-known experience for students in central Indiana, but in partnering with Hamilton Southeastern Schools (HSE), Conner Prairie is expanding that experience for HSE 4th graders.

Conner Prairie hosts an HSE teacher-in-residence and provides a designated HSE classroom on the grounds. Fourth grade classes visit Conner Prairie multiple times a year to learn about a variety of topics, with every lesson built around Indiana state standards. Lessons make use of our 1,000 acres of land and river, as well as our expert interpretation staff who bring lessons to life in new ways.

Preschool on the Prairie

5,840 HSE students attended class at Conner Prairie in 2022
ACTIVATING LEARNING

Summer Camp
Conner Prairie provides a unique backdrop for Adventure Camp, where young people can explore nature and experience favorite camp activities, while also building meaningful friendships, building social skills and finding opportunities for personal growth.

“He could not have done the same things anywhere else that he did during this week at Conner Prairie camp. It truly was an adventure!”
– Summer camp parent

OUR LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

Learning at Conner Prairie is unique and personal. As we invite guests to “Step into the Story,” we also strive to step into theirs. Through observation, deep listening, and thoughtful questioning, we create meaningful connections, offering guests an opportunity to go beyond “doing” and experience “being.” Our interactive exhibits, expansive grounds, and passionate staff provide limitless, immersive experiences, meeting guests where they are, honoring the individual needs, passions, interests, dreams, and fears of each unique human being. We offer guests the time and freedom to notice, to explore, to question, to feel, to play, and to sink into the process of learning, erasing the pressure of an expected outcome or final product.

We believe all learners, each with their own past experiences and intricate minds, have the right to construct their own knowledge, expanding through interactions with others and with their environment. History is at the core of what we do, because we must understand where we’ve been in order to understand where we are and look forward to where we might go. But history does not live in standards or even in research; history lives in our stories, and stories are enhanced through art, science, imagination, and nature. Conner Prairie acknowledges the power of intertwining these concepts and ideas, inviting guests into the stories we know, the stories they bring to us, and the stories we have yet to acknowledge or discover.
Heritage Breeds
In a continued effort to activate our future of agriculture at Conner Prairie we partnered with Noblesville’s 9th Street Bistro to showcase the importance of our heritage breeds animals and the impact they’ve had on the past and will have on the future. In a 9-course dining experience the Ossabaw Hog was featured in every course, and guests were taught where their food comes from and how agriculture shapes many other parts of their daily lives.

As a leader in sustaining and educating communities near and far on the importance of these animals, we once again welcomed guests to Conner Prairie during Heritage Breeds Week. Our five heritage breeds – Ossabaw Hogs, Arapawa Goats, English Longhorns, Tunis Sheep and American Rabbits – were showcased for guests of all ages during week-long engaging and educational programs.

Youth Agriculture Captains
A study of the Youth Volunteer Program, which includes the Youth Agriculture Captain program, piloted in 2022 showed the impact the program has on our youngest volunteers. Youth participants reported they learned valuable leadership skills, gained a greater understanding of various cultures, and harnessed a growth mindset throughout their time volunteering.

96% of the youth reported they could see themselves using a skill they learned through the program in the future.

“I’ve learned a ton through the YAC program, from trimming hooves to veterinary skills to helping deliver baby animals. But I’ve also learned a lot of skills like leadership and personal development and public speaking. I’m going into college as a film major...a lot of the skills I’ve learned through the YAC program will apply to that too.”

– Ella, a 2022 senior YAC
As we activate the future of our land, our sustainability initiatives are guided by passionate stewardship, community-driven programming and environmental restoration of the more than 1,000 acres Conner Prairie stewards.

**Duke Energy Tree Planting**
In 2022, our partnership with the White River Alliance and Duke Energy was strengthened with more projects aimed at protecting our most vital resource. Duke Energy volunteers gave their time to plant several trees at Conner Prairie to enhance habitats and reduce stormwater runoff.

**THE TREES PLANTED WILL HELP DRIVE EFFORTS TO EDUCATE 250,000 GUESTS**
on the value, function and maintenance of trees.
The many festivals at Conner Prairie in 2022 brought families and friends together for unforgettable moments once again. More importantly, revenue generated from these great events, along with other philanthropic support, helped further Conner Prairie’s mission to create access and year-round opportunity for under served families through the Access Pass Program. This vital on-going program breaks down barriers and allows our events to be a welcoming experience for everyone.

**Headless Horseman**
*Attendance: 45,500*
*Access Pass Families: 2,737*

Presented by **BANK OF AMERICA**

**A Merry Prairie Holiday**
*Attendance: 20,660*
*Access Pass Families: 1,781*

Access Pass Sponsored by: **Huntington**

**Jupiter Flights Balloon Festival**
*Attendance: 5,696*
*Access Pass Families: 356*

Sponsored by The City of Fishers

**Free Days**
(MLK Day, Presidents Day & Smithsonian Free Day)
*Attendance: 4,691*

Pictured: Presidents’ Day

**Symphony on the Prairie**
*Attendance: 84,732*

Volunteers
In 2022, our incredible volunteer team contributed more than **32,000 hours of service.**

**Horizon Council & Conner Prairie Alliance**
Conner Prairie is supported by two generous philanthropic groups of volunteers, the Conner Prairie Alliance and the Horizon Council.

In 2022, the Alliance celebrated their 40th anniversary. Throughout their history, the Alliance has played a role in supporting most major projects at Conner Prairie, including most recently Promised Land as Proving Ground. In 2022, the Apple Store sold **14,275 apples and served 5,636 people.**

2022 was also the 10th anniversary of the Horizon Council’s signature fundraising event, History on Tap. The event drew **1,085 attendees and 24 brewers.**

“I came to Headless Horseman after seeing the great reviews and having the ability through Access Pass...This experience is something that my family will cherish forever.”
DIVERSITY, EQUITY, ACCESSIBILITY, AND INCLUSION (DEAI)

A Welcoming Experience for All Guests
Conner Prairie continued its commitment to making our grounds more accessible to all guests by implementing changes to improve access. From adding accommodations to make buildings more accessible to intentional signage – we listened to the community to drive a better experience for everyone.

Indy Pride
For the first time, Conner Prairie participated in the Indianapolis Pride parade and festival. We were able to engage with the community with the goal of reaching new heights by creating more diverse and inclusive experiences with Conner Prairie on the grounds and in the community.

Juneteenth
Conner Prairie was part of the largest Juneteenth festival in Indiana in 2022. Guests celebrated with food, live music, education centers, games and so much more in the name of freedom, diversity, and inclusion.

Memory Café
As a certified dementia-friendly museum, we strive to provide a safe, welcoming, non-judgmental social environment where individuals with dementia and their caregivers can connect with one another.

Sensory Friendly Visits
In alignment with our DEAI Promise Statement and our intention to become inclusive for guests of all abilities, we offered monthly Sensory Friendly Hours in 2022, during which guests enjoy a calm environment on our grounds.
The Prairie Pathways Campaign is forging broader, deeper, and bolder pathways for guests as we strive to change the way the world views and uses museums.

Donors to the Prairie Pathways Campaign are bringing transformational experiences to Conner Prairie that will enable guests to “step into the story” in new and creative ways.

The campaign exceeded $19 million raised in 2022, which will support a re-imagined Museum Experience Center, Promised Land as Proving Ground, and a Transformational Outdoor Experience. Efforts to raise support for these important initiatives will continue in 2023.

Promised Land As Proving Ground

The first phase of our newest permanent exhibit Promised Land as Proving Ground opened to the public in 2022. Guests were able to experience the Origins Cabin, located in Prairietown, and will soon experience the complete exhibit when it opens in totality summer 2023. Telling more than 1000 years of African American history, the final phase of this exhibit will include augmented reality, which will allow visitors the opportunity to learn and interact with historic figures from Indiana’s past, as well as the creation of a new building that will allow the Museum to explore contemporary African American stories and community.
ON THE HORIZON

A Prairie Pathways Project
In 2023, Conner Prairie will activate 200+ acres of the prairie and 3.3 miles of the White River through natural and accessible trails and experience areas. The Prairie Trail will create an accessible and experientially rich journey by immersing guests in the landscape outlined by the oxbow of the White River. The Vista Trail will follow the natural contours of the Conner Prairie landscape.

Museum Experience Center
The Prairie Pathways Campaign will provide funding for a renovation of the current Welcome Center to become a true Museum Experience Center. We will increase our experience areas to include rotating exhibitions, inclusive storytelling, hands-on learning and play, and evolving HiSTEAMic (History, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Agriculture, and Mathematics) content to inspire learning and curiosity.

White River Education and Ecology Center
The Conner Prairie White River Education and Ecology Center is an opportunity for Conner Prairie, neighboring municipalities, and higher education institutions to come together to create environmental education, programming, and research. The Center will allow visitors to experience the White River and its role in the regional ecosystem and will complement other planned environmental and programmatic improvements in this area.

Food, Farm, and Energy Experiences
The Food, Farm and Energy Experience is a transformational idea that is centered around the legacy of Eli Lilly’s experimental farming in the 20th century to explain food production, farming, and energy production in the 21st century. The Food, Farm, and Energy Experience will present engaging and interactive experiences and will showcase innovation in agriculture and energy and inspire everyone to pursue solutions to feed and power the world.
CONNER PRAIRIE MUSEUM, INC.
Summarized Statement of Activities for the
12 Months Ending December 31, 2022*
*Preliminary figures

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<th>Revenue &amp; Support</th>
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<td>Admission &amp; Program Fees</td>
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<td>Rental &amp; Other Income</td>
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CONNER PRAIRIE FOUNDATION, INC.
Summarized Statement of Financial Position for the
12 Months Ending December 31, 2022*
*Preliminary figures

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<td><strong>Total Liabilities &amp; Net Assets</strong></td>
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**REVENUE & SUPPORT**

Conner Prairie Museum, Inc.

- **Endowment Support** 40%
- **Gifts, Sponsorships & Grants** 12%
- **Management & General** 13%
- **Public Affairs & Marketing** 12%
- **Programs & Guest Experience** 68%
- **Food & Retail** 10%
- **Rental & Other Income** 13%
- **Admissions & Program Fees** 20%
- **Fundraising** 6%
- **Memberships** 5%
- **Membership Services** 1%

*Preliminary figures*

**EXPENDITURES**

Conner Prairie Museum, Inc.

- **Programs & Guest Experience** 68%
- **Management & General** 13%
- **Public Affairs & Marketing** 12%
- **Fundraising** 6%
- **Membership Services** 1%
2022 CONNER PRAIRIE LEADERSHIP

CONNER PRAIRIE MUSEUM
Reggie Henderson - Chair
Steve Hageman - Vice Chair
Suzanne Gaidoo - Secretary
Jane Niederberger - Treasurer
Christine Altman - Immediate Past Chair

Jessica Bastin
Douglas Battaglia
Marvin Blade
Constance Brown
Norman Burns - Conner Prairie President & CEO

Ross Hendrickson
Leonard Hoops
Kathleen House
Christine Johnson
Dave Kinard
Julia Church Kozicki
Naomi Kwang
Deon Levingston
Leah McGrath
Clarence G. Newsome
Don Orr
Rebecca Shrum
Eric Spencer
Denny Sponsel
Selina Stoller
Brian Timmerman

CONNER PRAIRIE FOUNDATION
Chris Cooke - Foundation Chair
Bill Batt
Rita McCluskey
Jay Ricker
Kevin Schmidt
Jerry Semler
Rich Thrapp

DIRECTOR EMERITI
Doug Church
Berkley Duck
Stan Hurt
Pat Garrett Rooney - deceased
Jay Ricker